

The *Recall Sculpture* exhibition presents 41 small sculptures created between the 1950s and the 1970s. They can be considered precursors of contemporary art today.

From 1953 to 1973, the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA) collected work by contemporary artists working in Belgium, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Spain, Italy, Hungary and Argentina.

At the time, the active collecting of contemporary sculptures was determined by the changing attitude in Europe's museums. In 1945, after the end of WWII, several museums, such as the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, and the Musée National d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris decided to shift their focus to contemporary art. At the same time, various European

cities created sculpture parks that later developed into fully-fledged sculpture museums. These new collections were built solely through the purchase of contemporary art.

The attention to individual experiments in contemporary art in post-war Europe was diametrically opposed to the fascist cultural policy of both the German Nationalist Party (1933-1945) and its Italian counterpart (1922-1945). They officially proclaimed an idealized realism as the only acceptable plastic form of expression for the propaganda of the fascist legacy.

When **Walther Vanbeselaere** was appointed head curator of the KMSKA in 1948, he was immediately confronted with the task of buying contemporary art for the museum. Into the 1960s, he continued to strive for the creation of a 'contemporary art section' in the KMSKA, with its own gallery in the museum and a separate purchasing committee (a committee consisting of supporters and connoisseurs of the latest art movements). The historical value of the works acquired would only become apparent later.

Lode Craeybeckx, mayor of Antwerp and president of the board of members of the KMSKA, was Walther's ally. In 1950, on the grounds of what is now the Middelheim Museum, the "International exhibition of open air sculptures 1900-1950" took place. It was the first Biennale of contemporary

sculpture. The show's success led to the establishment of a permanent museum in 1951. In 1953, the second Biennale was organised. For the KMSKA these Biennales were an important source of information on the prevailing trends in sculpture on an international level. The KMSKA acquired the majority of the works shown here after they had seen them at the Biennales.

NEW FIGURATION – FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION

The first purchases by the KMSKA were figurative sculptures by a generation of artists born around the turn of the century, who were active and successful during the interbellum period (1918-1940, between WWI and WWII). In the years directly following WWII their work once more received full recognition. Major art festivals organised at the

time, such as the Venice and São Paulo Biennales and the Documenta Kassel, played an important role in this renewed surge of interest in the Modernists. Typical for the early purchases of figurative sculpture – and some later ones as well – are the traditional subjects and the combination of stylistic features from archaic cultures with individualised contemporary and figurative forms of expression. The influence of ancient cultures can be attributed to the new found knowledge of archaeological artefacts from Egypt and the Mediterranean that were excavated at the end of the 19th century.

In this exhibition work can be seen by the following artists who were actively influenced by these themes: the Germans **Joseph Jaekel**, *Sebastiaan*; **Bernhard Heiliger**, *De kleine veerman* (1956); **Toni**

Stadler, *Masker* (1953); **Fritz Koenig**, *Camarque, VIII* (1957); **Gabriele Marwede**, *Moeder en kind*; the Italians **Marcello Mascherini**, *Suzanna* (1950), **Marino Marini**, *Grote danseres* (1952); the Austrian **Heinz Leinfellner**, *Vegetatief hoofd* and the Croatian **Kosta Angeli Radovani**, *Zittende vrouw*.

EXISTENTIAL EXPRESSIONISM

In these figurative works the sculptors express implicitly their experiences and their reactions to the barbarism of bygone warfare. **Agenore Fabbri** creates an expressionistic plastic language which he uses to explicitly denounce existential angst – fears caused by, among others, the atomic bombs the American air force dropped on Japan and the development of a nuclear arsenal during the Cold War

between the communist and the capitalist world.

ABSTRACT SCULPTURE

In 1958 the KMSKA bought its first abstract sculpture. *Gesprek met de tijd* (1957) by Italian sculptor **Pietro Consagra** epitomises Informal sculpture (one of the many abstract schools in art after 1945.) The assemblage, cuts and colour of the material are the result of various processes used by the artist to express his own abstract philosophy.

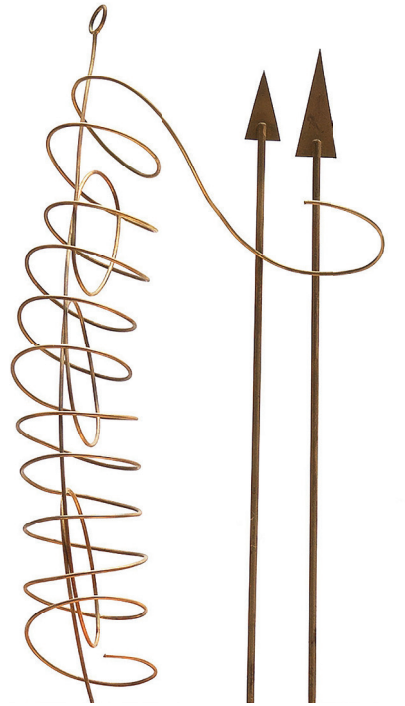
Grote Gewonde (1960) by Italian artist **Francesco Somaini** is another distinctly informal sculpture. The result originates from his inner self and echoes a divided post-war world.

In Italy, **Arnaldo's** and **Gio Pomodoro's** constructivist sculptures were a reaction to the spontaneous nature of art

informel. **Willy Anthoons'** and **Luc Verlee's** works are a construction of simple, almost architectonic three-dimensional shapes. Without any reference to reality these are plastic syntheses loaded with personal observations and spiritual meaning.

However, splitting up the artists into several artistic trends or art movements is not always logical. All of these artists cannot be classified into one particular movement as they all created both figurative as well as abstract works.

As from the end of 2019 the pieces in this exhibition will occupy a permanent place in the new KMSKA.



RECALL SCULPTURE

Sculptures from the collection of the KMSKA

28.10.2017
–
18.03.2018

PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

FREE admission to the museum and the exhibition

ACCESSIBILITY

Free use of electric cart upon reservation

OPENINGSUREN

October till March: 10am – 5pm

Visitors are welcome up to a half hour before closing time.

Please make your way to the exit in good time: the gates are closed punctually!

CLOSING DAYS

Closed on Mondays (open on Easter Monday and Whit Monday)

Closed on 1st November, 25th December, 1st January, 1st May, Ascension Day

Exhibition in collaboration with the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp

Curator: Greta Van Broeckhoven

Conservation and Restoration: Cleo Cafmeyer in collaboration with Derek Biront, Nicky Enlargement, Elisabeth Am Zehnhoff and Ian Grosfeld.

Scenography: Pieter Boons and Maurane Colson (www.heimat.be)

Realisation: SB/BOF/DECO under the instruction of Tom Huybrechts and Yelko Clemente Alonso

Fausto Melotti, *De dans*, not dated. KMSKA – Lukas-Art in Flanders vzw. Photo: Hugo Maertens
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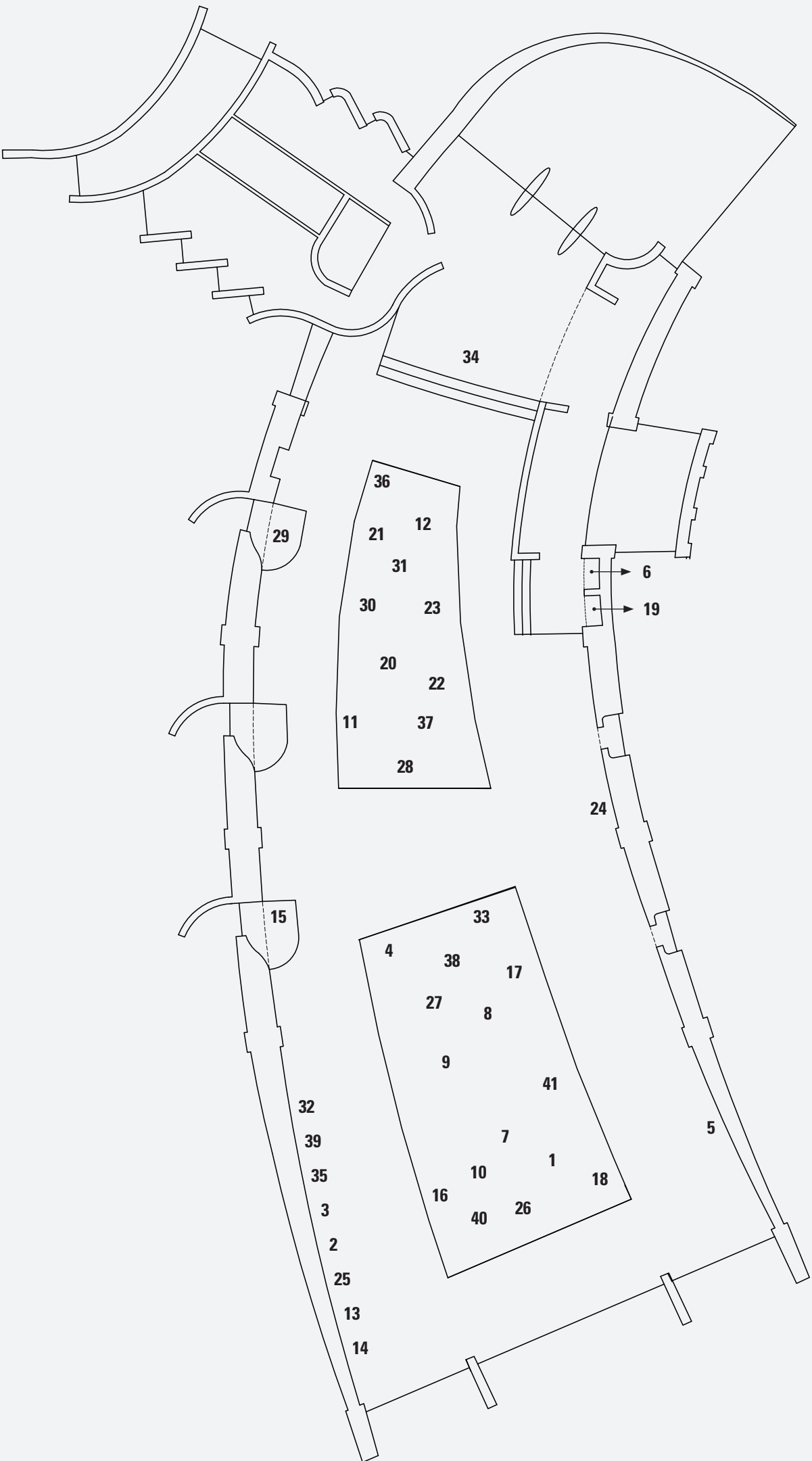
The Middelheim Museum is supported by the Middelheim Promotors and Ackermans & van Haaren, Argo Law, BASF, BNP Paribas Fortis, CMB, Cordeel, Delen Private Bank, Deloitte, Deme, EY, Grant Thornton, Hubo, Hugo Ceusters, inno.com, KBC, Leasinvest Real Estate, Pamica, Port of Antwerp, SipWell, Soudal, Vanbreda Risk & Benefits.

EXHIBITED WORKS :

1. **Willy ANTHOONS**, Mechelen 1911 - 1982, *Immanent teken*, 1959, wood (pear)
2. **Giacomo BENEVELLI**, Reggio nell'Emilia 1925 - Pavia 2011, *Aggregaat in wording 2 en 5*, 1964, bronze
3. **Venancio BLANCO**, Matilla de los Caños del Río 1923, *Ekster*, 1964, bronze and stone
4. **Floriano BODINI**, Gemonio 1933 - Milan 2005, *De vermoorde*, 1960, bronze
5. **Pietro CONSAGRA**, Mazaro del Vallo 1920 - Milan 2005, *Gesprek met de tijd*, 1957, bronze and wood
6. **Remy CORNELISSEN**, Turnhout 1913 - Antwerp 1990, *Hooglied*, 1977, chromed steel
7. **Roel D'HAESE**, Geraardsbergen 1921 - Bruges 1996, *Bronzen toren*, 1955, bronze
8. **Agenore FABBRI**, Barba 1911 - Savona 1998, *Dans met steltloper*, 1958, bronze
9. **Julio GERO**, Arad 1910 - unknown 1977, *Saturne*, 1962, iron
10. **Georges GRARD**, Doornik 1901 - Koksijde 1984, *De Afrikaanse*, 1957-1958, bronze
11. **Bernhard HEILIGER**, Stettin 1915 - Berlin 1995, *De kleine veerman naar het brug-beeld van Esslingen*, 1956, bronze and stone
12. **Joseph JAEKEL**, Walmenroth 1907 - Köln 1985, *Heilige Sebastianus van Rome*, 1949-1950, embossed brass
13. **Fritz KOENIG**, Würzburg 1924 - Altdorf 2017, *Vogel*, 1951, bronze
14. **Fritz KOENIG**, Camarque VIII, 1957, bronze
15. **Frans LAMBERECHTS**, Sint-Jans-Molenbeek 1909 - Jette 1988, *Deemstering*, polyester and mixed media
16. **Heinz LEINFELLNER**, Zidoni - Most 1911 - Vienna 1974, *Vegetatief hoofd*, bronze
17. **Charles LEPLAE**, Leuven 1903 - Brussels 1961, *Staannd meisje*, 1949, terracotta
18. **Mark MACKEN**, Diest 1913 - Antwerp 1977, *Vrede*, 1952, bronze
19. **Mark MACKEN**, *Regen*, 1957, bronze
20. **Cristino MALLO**, Tuy 1908 - Madrid 1989, *Picador*, 1958, bronze
21. **Giacomo MANZU**, Bergamo 1908 - Rome 1991, *Danspas*, 1953, bronze

22. **Marino MARINI**, Pistoia 1901 - Viareggio 1980, *De grote danseres*, 1951-1953, bronze
23. **Marcello MASCHERINI**, Udine 1907 - Padua 1983, *Suzanna*, 1950, bronze
24. **Fausto MELOTTI**, Rovereto 1901 - Milan 1986, *De dans*, 1972, gilded brass and plexi
25. **Gabriele MERWEDE**, Hannover 1925, *Moeder en kind*, bronze
26. **Clemens PASCH**, Sevelen 1910 – Düsseldorf 1985, *Nana (Nana van Kovats)*, 1961-1962, bronze
27. **Lorenzo PEPE**, Cassano-Murge 1916 - Milan 1984, *Muilezelin*, 1957, bronze
28. **Arnaldo POMODORO**, Morciano di Romagna 1926, *Omaggio al Cosmonauto nr. 2*, 1962, bronze
29. **Gio POMODORO**, Orciano di Pesaro 1930 - Milan 2002, *Marat spiraal*, 1972, stone (Dinant marble)
30. **Kosta Angeli RADOVANI**, London 1916 - Zagreb 2002, *Zittende vrouw*, terracotta
31. **Erzebet SCHAAR**, Budafok 1908 - Budapest 1975, *Deur*, bronze
32. **Gustav SEITZ**, Mannheim-Neckarau 1906 - Hamburg 1969, *De schrijver Bertolt Brecht*, 1959, bronze
33. **Max Eugen SEIZ**, Schwäbisch Gmund am Tegernsee 1927, *Vrouw*, 1964, bronze
34. **Francesco SOMAINI**, Lomazzo 1926 - Como 2005, *Grote gewonde*, bronze and sheet iron
35. **Toni STADLER**, Munich 1888 - 1982, *Masker*, 1953, bronze
36. **Maria Josep SUBIRACHS SITJAR**, Barcelona 1927 - 2014, *Frontal*, wood and stone
37. **Luc VERLEE**, Zele 1939, *Ever*, bluestone
38. **Luc VERLEE**, *Ontmoeting*, stone (of Euville)
39. **Priska VON MARTIN**, Freiburg 1912 - Munich 1982, *Amazone*, 1956, cast bronze
40. **Hans WIMMER**, Pfarrkirchen 1907 - Munich 1992, *Gezadeld paard*, 1952, bronze
41. **Fritz WOTRUBA**, Vienna 1907 - 1975, *Hoofd*, 1954, bronze

In the museum park, you can find works from the Middelheimcollection by the artists underlined.



ON OFFER TO THE PUBLIC IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXHIBITION:

- **Publication** on the occasion of the exhibition (in Dutch) containing texts by curator Greta Van Broeckhoven. Published by BAI, € 24,50. Available in the museum shop.
- **Introductory film** in the entry hall of the Middelheim Castle, Dutch/ English, also available on www.middelheimmuseum.be and on the video channel ARTtube.be.
- **Free tours for individual visitors**, no reservation required, in Dutch Every 2nd Sunday of the month from 2pm till 4pm: 12th November, 10th December 2017, 14th January, 11th February, 11th March 2018. Separate guides available for adults and families with children aged 6 to 12 available.
- **Group visits and/or creative workshops** (adults, young people, children, also for schools) upon request, in Dutch, English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian.
€ 75 for a two-hour tour, max. 15 persons per guide, max. 4 guides at the same time.
€ 85 for a two-hour workshop, max. 15 persons per guide, max. 3 guides at the same time.

Reservation:
Visit Antwerpen **T** 03 232 01 03 **E** tickets@visitantwerpen.be

ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

- **Middelheim APP:** information in Dutch and English on the history of the museum and its collection, with additional information for young people and children. Free to download, at home or in the museum, on your smartphone, via the App store or GooglePlay
- **Audioguide** in Dutch/English/French/German € 3 (free upon presentation of your NMBS train ticket)

Available at the reception desk in the Middelheim Castle:
Free map of the park, indicating the key works, the most remarkable trees and some additional information

Muzzé-cases for a thematic exploration of the sculpture park and the permanent collection, free of charge, for 6-12 year olds and their escorts (in Dutch)

MUSEUMSHOP

MIKA MUSEUMCAFE
E info@mi-ka.be - www.mi-ka.be

DOCUMENTATIECENTRUM
Open by appointment.
Admission is free upon presentation of your ID card.

T 03 288 33 64 or **E** middelheimmuseum_bibliotheek@stad.antwerpen.be

WIFI
Free WIFI in the castle.

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